

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. – 12. (Cancelled)

13. (**Currently Amended**) A process for bleaching a cellulosic fibre material with a peroxide compound in an aqueous alkaline medium, comprising a bleaching step wherein

a) a polymer solution ~~containing~~ consisting of a first polymer (A) comprising a homopolymer of acrylic acid, methacrylic acid or maleic acid, or a copolymer of acrylic acid and/or methacrylic acid with an unsaturated dicarboxylic acid, and a second polymer (B) comprising a poly- α -hydroxyacrylic acid or a salt thereof, said polymer solution having a pH of at most 6, is added to a cellulosic fibre material, and

b) thereafter adding a peroxide compound and an alkaline substance and carrying out the bleaching;

wherein step (b) is carried out essentially immediately after the addition of the polymer solution to the cellulosic fibre material, without a washing step between steps (a) and (b).

14. (**Currently Amended**) The process of claim 13, wherein the bleaching is carried out in the absence of a nitrogen-containing chelating agent.

15. (**Currently Amended**) The process of claim 13 or 14, wherein the bleaching is carried out in the absence of added calcium and/or magnesium ions.

16. (Cancelled)

17. **(Currently Amended)** The process of ~~claim 17~~ claim 13, wherein the polymer solution has a pH of at most 5.

18. **(Currently Amended)** The process of claim 13, wherein the first polymer (A) comprises a raw polymer obtained from the homopolymerization of acrylic acid, methacrylic acid or maleic acid or from the copolymerization of acrylic acid and/or methacrylic acid with an unsaturated dicarboxylic acid, said raw polymer having a pH of below 7.

19. **(Previously Presented)** The process of claim 18, in which the raw polymer has a pH below 6.

20. **(Previously Presented)** The process of claim 18, in which the raw polymer has a pH below 5.

21. **(Currently Amended)** The process of claim 13, wherein the first polymer (A) has a molecular weight of at least 4000.

22. **(Currently Amended)** The process of claim 13, wherein the first polymer (A) has a molecular weight of at least 10000.

23. **(Currently Amended)** The process of claim 13, wherein the first polymer (A) has a molecular weight of at least 30000.

24. **(Currently Amended)** The process of claim 13, wherein the second polymer (B) has a molecular weight of at least 5000.

25. **(Currently Amended)** The process of claim 13, wherein the second polymer (B) has a molecular weight of at least 10000.

26. **(Currently Amended)** The process of claim 13, wherein the second polymer (B) has a molecular weight of at least 15000.

27. **(Currently Amended)** The process of claim 13, wherein the first polymer (A) comprises a copolymer of acrylic acid and/or methacrylic acid with maleic acid, wherein the molar ratio of acrylic acid and/or methacrylic acid to maleic acid is from 80:20 to 20:80.

28. **(Currently Amended)** The process of claim 13, wherein the first polymer (A) comprises a copolymer of acrylic acid and/or methacrylic acid with maleic acid, wherein the molar ratio of acrylic acid and/or methacrylic acid to maleic acid is from 70:30 to 50:50.

29. **(Currently Amended)** The process of claim 13, wherein the share of the second polymer (B) is from 1 to 50% by weight of the total amount of the first and second polymers (A) and (B).

30. **(Currently Amended)** The process of claim 13₁ wherein the polymers (A) and (B) as active material are added in a total amount of 0.05 to 10 kg per ton of dry cellulosic fibre material.

31. **(Currently Amended)** The process of claim 13₁ wherein the polymers (A) and (B) as active material are added in a total amount of 0.1 to 5 kg per ton of dry cellulosic fibre material.

32. **(Currently Amended)** The process of claim 13₁ wherein the cellulosic fibre material comprises a chemical, mechanical, chemi-mechanical or deinked pulp.